

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

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INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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/102 W

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FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8220
INFO USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 4412

EO 11652: XGDS
TAGS: PINS, SHUM, IR
SUBJ: MORE SEVERE INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE

REF: TEHRAN 4383

SUMMARY: NUMBER OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS INCREASES SLIGHTLY.
TEHRAN UNIVERSITY DEAN ATTACHED, BADLY INJURED. RELIGIOUS
LEADERS AIM FOR QUIET CEREMONIES ON MAY 9. TEHRAN AND OTHER
CITIES GENERALLLY QUIET AS OF NOON MAY 9 AFTER INCIDENTS MAY 8.
END SUMMARY.

1. PRESS MORNING MAY 9 REPORTS SEVERAL VIOLENT INCIDENTS MAY 8
IN TEHRAN AND OTHER CITIES-ISFAHAN, TABRIZ, KASHAN, KERMAN,
AND ARSANJAN. IN TEHRAN, EVENING MAY 8 A GROUP OF YOUTHS
ATTACKED A BANK OF TEHRAN BRANCH IN ABBASSABAD AND BROKE ALL
FRONTAL GLASS IN A MAJOR MOVE HOUSE TWO BLOCKS FROM THE IRAN-
AMERICA SOCIETY. RIOTERS REPORTEDLY ATTACKED THREE BANKS IN
IN KASHAN AND ONE IN ARSANJAN.

2. IN ISFAHAN, CONSUL MCGAFFEY REPORTED EVENING MAY 8
LARGE GROUP STAGED PEACEFUL DIVERSION AT CITY HALL WHILE
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ORGANIZED GROUP OF 20 TO 40 FIREBOMBED LIQUOR STORE AND
NEARBY MOVIE. FIREBOMBING WATCHED BY AMCIT WITNESS, WHO
SAW ELEVEN FIRE BOMBS THROWN, ALL OF WWHICH EXPLODED.
ISFAHAN OPEN FOR BUSINESS NORMALLY MAY 9.

3. CONSUL METRINKO REPORTS THAT THERE WERE SUBSTANTIAL
RIOTS WITH SHOOTING AT AZARBADEGAN UNIVERSITY IN TABRIZ

EVENING MAY 8. GUNFIRE WAS HEARD AND WITNESSES REPORTED MANY WOUNDED. GROUP OF STUDENTS TRIED TO BURN THREE CARS, ONE OF WHICH EXPLODED AND CAUSED SUBSTANTIAL INJURIES. MORNING MAY 9, TABRIZ MERCHANTS OPENED FOR BUSINESS, THEN ABOUT 0900 QUICKLY SHUT DOWN. CONSUL SAYS 95 PER CENT OF BUSINESSES CLOSED AND JOINT POLICE/ARMY PATROLS AT ALL MAJOR AND MANY MINOR INTERSECTIONS. AS OF 1400 LOCAL TIME, MAY 9, THERE HAD BEEN NO FURTHER VIOLENCE.

4. ON UNIVERSITY SCENE, TEHRAN DEMONSTRATIONS TOOK UGLY TURN MAY 8 WHEN UNIDENTIFIED ASSAILANTS ATTACKED AND SEVERALY IJURED LITERATURE FACULTY DEAN EZZATOLLAH NEGAHBAN, ONE OF IRAN'S FOREMOST ARCHAEOLOGISTS. SOURCES TELL US NEGAHBAN RECEIVED STAB WOUNDS WHICH MAY HAVE CUT SOME TENDONS IN HIS RIGHT ARM. HE REMAINS IN HOSPITAL. ACCORDING TO PRESS, HE HAD BEEN THREATENED EARLIER AND HIS OFFICE SET ON FIRE BUT PERSISTED IN COMING TO WORK. PRESS REPORTS KERMAN UNIVERSITY IS NOT ONLY CLOSED AS NOTED PER REFTTEL, BUT 14 STUDENTS WERE ARRESTED AFTER STUDENT WAS INJURED BY A GROUP OF YOUTHS. PRESS ALSO REPORTED STUDENT WAS INJURED AT KARAJ COLLEGE AFTER ALLEGEDLY RESISTING ENTREATIES OF THIS CLASSMATES TO JOIN CLASS BOYCOTT.

5. IN PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS WITH IRANIAN WHO SAW AYATOLLAH SHIRATMADARI IN QOM LAST WEEK, EMBOFFS LEARNED THAT CONFIDENTIAL

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RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP HAD TOYED WITH IDEA OF SEEKING SHUT-DOWN OF ALL BUSINESSES MAY 9 BUT EVENTUALLY OPTED FOR COMMEMORATIVE SERVICES ON GROUNDS THEY LESS LIKELY TO LEAD TO VIOLENCE. WHILE SOURCE WAS PRESENT, SEVERAL RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN VARIOUS CITIES CALLED SHARIATMADARI SEEKING HIS ADVICE ON WHAT TO DO, AND HE ADVISED THEM TO HOLD COMMEMORATIVE SERVICES RATHER THAN ENGAGE IN MARCHES OR OTHER ACTIVITIES.

6. TEHRAN AND OTHER CITIES APPEAR QUIET SO FAR, MAY 9, BUT THERE IS REINFORCED POLICE PRESENCE IN MOST PLACES. TEHRAN BAZAAR IS VIRTUALLY CLOSED AND MASHAD BAZAAR IS CLOSED. TEHRAN POLICE HAVE BEEN USING HELICOPTERS TO KEEP AND EYE ON CITY SINCE MID-MORNING. SULLIVAN

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